



NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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National Weather Service providing new information to keep beachgoers safe
Agency seeks feedback on new service

NOAA's National Weather Service in Grand Rapids, Michigan will begin testing a new "Beach Hazards Statement" to provide a single location for all lakeshore and beach hazards information, including the expected timing and impacts of the hazard and recommended actions for preparedness and safety.

The agency launched a Weather-Ready Nation initiative in 2011 that has spurred improvements in communicating risks to the public for many types of hazards. This initiative was prompted when Weather Service staff realized that many rescues, injuries and deaths in coastal areas were related to beach hazards not currently addressed in official watches, warnings and advisories.

Grand Rapids is one of six National Weather Service forecast offices that will begin piloting the new tool on May 25, along with San Francisco Bay Area, Calif.; Newport/Morehead City, N.C.; New Orleans/Baton Rouge, La.; Seattle, Wash.; and Tampa Bay, Fla.

Beach Hazards Statements will inform the public about a wide range of hazards, including high wave action, structural currents, rip currents, longshore currents and potential for lightning along the shoreline.

"We're simplifying beach hazard information to make it more accessible to the American public," said Dan Cobb, meteorologist in charge at the Grand Rapids NWS forecast office. "Whether you're taking your family to the beach for a relaxing day or loading up the boat for a day of fishing, these new statements will provide situational awareness of the conditions you may face so you can plan accordingly."

Beach Hazard Statements will be issued for a given lakeshore area as needed within 12-24 hours of a threat. The statement may be issued further in advance if there is high confidence in the forecast or if the threat is widespread. This new product is being tested as part of the National Weather Service's effort to build a Weather-Ready Nation. Equipped with valuable information about beach hazards, lakeshore residents and visitors will be better equipped to make decisions to protect their health and safety.

Before possibly expanding this initiative to other parts of the country, the agency will gauge the success and value of the new service. National Weather Service partners and customers, including members of the public, are encouraged to provide feedback at: weather.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=CHMBHS. The test will continue until further notice unless the agency receives significant negative feedback.

The National Weather Service is the primary source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for the United States and its territories. It operates the most advanced weather and flood warning and forecast system in the world, helping to protect lives and property and enhance the national economy. Working with partners, the National Weather Service is building a [Weather-Ready Nation](#) to support community resilience in the face of increasing vulnerability to extreme weather. Visit us online at weather.gov and on [Facebook](#).

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/usnoaagov>.

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